

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, April 23, 2007

The Center of Clayton – OASIS Meeting Room A

The following members were present:

Alex Berger	Dick Hyde
Mimi Deem	Jill Indovino
Lori Elliot	Omri Praiss
Judy Goodman	Rich Yawitz

Excused/Absent

Deb Dubin

Also Present:

Cindy Berger, Hanley House Council member

Patty DeForrest, Director of Parks and Recreation

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the March meeting were approved as read.

Director's Report

Ms. DeForrest reported that the Tennis Center will open May 5. The Youth Activity Center will open on May 1 and Shaw Park Aquatic Center will open on May 26. The City will begin offering Green Home Series classes on April 28th at the Center of Clayton. We are offering many summer camps this year which begin the week of June 4.

Upcoming events include; Parties in the Park, Clayton Farmer's Market, the Jazz Festival, Taste of Clayton, and Musical Nights. Clayton Farmer's Market's new location is on Straub's west parking lot. The market opens on May 19. The Jazz Festival and the Taste of Clayton will be held the weekend of June 1.

The Master Plan is in the pre-final draft. The working committee has a copy of the draft. The last step will be to prioritize projects. Once we do that it will come back to the Parks Commission for approval and then go to the BOA. The Ice Rink Task Force is working on the market analysis. We are on schedule to open as an open air rink this fall.

We have seen a pretty steady sale of Non-Resident Pool Passes. We have also sold over 40 Platinum Passes. This is strong sales for a new promotion.

On May 8 at 7:00 p.m. there will be a joint meeting of the Board of Education and Board of Alderman to discuss a preliminary review of the CRSWC budget. This is a chance to get the two parent organizations to talk about the Center of Clayton.

Park Names

(Please see attached memo for all detailed information.)

The following park name changes were proposed and approved:

- Hanley House to be changed to Hanley House Park, Site of the Historic Hanley House
- Alamo Park to be changed to Henry Wright Park

The Commission voted on the proposed changes. Mr. Hyde made the first motion to approve the change and Ms. Indovino made the section motion. All were in favor of the change.

Hanley House Recommendation

Ms. Berger who is a member of the Hanley House Council came to the meeting to show her support to Ms. Goodman and Ms. DeForrest and to hear the Commission's input about the Hanley House recommendation. Ms. Goodman asked for a vote from the Commission to support the recommendation.

After quite a bit of work the Hanley House Council is ready to move forward with a recommendation.

(Please see the Hanley House memo for all detailed information.) Their recommendation is such: the

Hanley House Council recommends that the City of Clayton maintain the Martin Franklin Hanley House as a historic house museum. The Council also recommends that the City plan and develop an ancillary building and explore expansion of the site in order to enhance Hanley House's effectiveness as an educational resource for the community. Again this recommendation will go to the BOA in May or early June. The Parks and Recreation Commission can support the recommendation, support the recommendation with modification or prepare their own recommendation to the BOA. Ms. Goodman noted that what we want is the Commission's support of this recommendation.

Ms. Goodman also noted that the Council wants to develop an ancillary building which will allow us to have groups come through and have educational experiences. What we want to do is end the work of the Hanley House Council and create the Friends of Hanley House as a fundraising part to work in conjunction with the City and hopefully the Clayton School District to determine a use and a source of good funding. We will be piecing together funds to make this happen. We are beginning to discuss curriculums and do not have full support from the school district at this time. We issued an RFQ for preparing a historic structures report so we know exactly what we need to do to the house and so we can put numbers to things in the future. Ms. Goodman noted that we to know that there is support for moving forward with this recommendation. It is like prioritizing in the Master Plan for parks without knowing exactly where the money is coming from. We are at the place where we have to have some agreement. This is our priority and our vision for what we want to achieve going forward.

The Commission members noted that they would like to have additional information about the monetary aspects of the Hanley House Council's recommendation in reference to the funding of an ancillary building on the site. Mr. Praiss stated that he felt uncomfortable agreeing to the recommendation because there are too many uncertainties. The Commission also stated that they would like to have phases of the project included with the recommendation, as well as include details about how they will achieve their vision. Ms. Goodman noted that it is difficult to go to those in the community because we are stuck without support for fundamental views as to what we want to accomplish with the Hanley House. Mr. Yawitz stated that it would be irresponsible of the Commission to go forward with the recommendation due to the lack of interest in the Hanley House. He stated he would be in favor of the project if the funds could be raised independently to support the project. Ms. Goodman noted that it is going to be difficult for the Council to proceed and get out into the community to form the Friends of the Hanley House. Mr. Berger viewed the recommendation with a different thought. He stated that the vision of the Council is to make this a community asset and ask the City to support the maintenance of the museum and if there is an expansion to enhance the effectiveness to make it a community educational asset. The BOA is going have to direct different activities not to go along from a financial point of view. We should focus on the vision. He raised these questions: Do we agree with the Hanley House Council recommendation to create the Hanley House museum? and Do we support their vision as to what we will do after that? The goal has been classified as: what does the Council want to do and what is the vision. Mr. Berger stated he is supportive of a modified recommendation.

Mr. Praiss made the recommendation that the Clayton Parks and Recreation Commission fully supports the Hanley House Council try to independently sponsor the project. Ms. Goodman reminded the Commission that they are only being asked to support the vision of the Hanley House. Mr. Yawitz put together this revision of the original recommendation "The Parks and Recreation Commission recommended that the City of Clayton endorse the Martin Franklin Hanley House as a historic museum provided the Hanley House Council raises substantial funds towards the future construction and maintenance of the house." Mr. Yawitz noted that this recommendation is contingent upon satisfying the financial piece. Ms. Goodman stated in response she and Ms. DeForrest will work on revising the wording of the original recommendation and report back to the Commission at the May 21 meeting.

It was also noted that the School board and the teachers will get involved with the Hanley House project in the Fall. The teachers in the district will likely begin to bring in certain groups of students to assist with developing curriculums associated with the history of the Hanley House.

Dog Park

Ms. DeForrest reported that her staff researched liability issues related to dog parks. They found that liability issues related to dog parks are really non-existent. Our insurance carrier said that there would be no additional costs to have a dog park, no special policies required as long as the dog park is on City property and run by the City. Dog parks are generally run by the members of the park and if there is an issue or injury it is settled among the members. All dog park members are required to sign a waiver and it appears they are run by a board or a club that oversees the management. Overall very few incidents reported regarding harm to the dogs or owners at the park. The members truly police the park to ensure safety. Most dog parks do not allow Pit Bulls.

Ms. DeForrest's biggest concern is to decide where we would put a dog park if we established one. Where is the land we would put it on? Most municipalities take excess land and turn it into dog parks. The City of Clayton would have to use existing land. The site we have looked at is the east side of Oak Knoll Park. The benefit of that site is there is parking there. The needs assessment survey showed that 31% of the people have an interest in dog parks. Once communities establish dog parks there are less dogs running loose. The Commission is in favor of continuing research of developing a dog park in Clayton. A subcommittee will be formed to study this topic.

Old Business/New Business

Mr. Hyde announced that Ms. Indovino successfully completed the Boston Marathon.

There was a glitch in the numbers associated with the merger recommendations so they are being reviewed. There is still an opening for Chairman of the Commission. Ms. DeForrest noted that if anyone knows of anyone who may be interested to contact Mr. Berger. Other new members will be appointed in June.

Ms. Deem runs a bicycle club in the City of St. Louis for the St. Louis City schools. She was nominated for the Met Life Award and she received the \$5,000 grant. Ms. Deem announced that now the middle school children will be able to take more bicycle trips throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted By,
Denise Ucinski